

FPT Meeting of Ministers Responsible for Justice and Public Safety

Feb 23-24, 2022

Feb. 23, 2022

1. Welcome and Introductions

Minister Lametti

- We all face pressures and we need to respond – COVID-19
- Minister Gibault and Minister Mendicino's schedules required us to make some changes to the agenda
- Legal Aid will move to be item 9 on day 2
- Today we will start with Firearms Guns and Gangs and Aboriginal Policing first today

Minister Mendicino

- We ensure integrity in our borders
- We have worked with you to get a grasp on the risks to public safety and international security
- We have invoked the Emergencies Act – was not our first or second choice. But given the challenges posed by the illegal blockades, especially at ports of entry, and the entrenchment in Ottawa. Got advice from multiple police services that they need new tools, in a targeted way, for a limited time span. Needed to be able to suspend some rights for a limited time. Needed to designate “no go” zones for critical infrastructure protection. Commandeer certain assets like tow truck and barriers to regulate crowd control. Target leadership and those in secure zones – freezing accounts. In each of these measures there needed to be an exercise consistent with section 7 and 8 rights under the Charter. We have seen a dramatic improvement on the ground in Ottawa and at our borders since invoking this legislation. We are working with our law enforcement partners and won't leave it in place any longer than necessary.
- None of us wanted to declare a state of emergency. We know many of you are still in the throws of dealing with the risk posed by these illegal blockades. We are much better informed by these experiences.
- The tactics that are being deployed – provincial or national symbols closely related to democratic institutions, blocking supplies and ports of entry, and the close coordinated timing.
- The statements around overthrowing governments
- The damage to our economy

Quebec Minister Mathieu Levesque

- Unlike the federal government, we think the legal obligation to have consultation with PT governments was not satisfied by the Feb. 14 meeting
- Consultation was necessary
- We cannot be consulted on a decision already made
- Special measures under this Act can be considered
- Interpreter notes the sound is very poor
- Our government is not convinced the legislation will deal with the threats and we are not convinced they are threats to the security of Canada, or threats of violence to infrastructure or people

- We have the ability to use our own police services to respond
- This left a bitter taste in the mouth of Quebecers when the Act was used before
- Quebec has informed Canada of our position
- We have resolutions not to have this power used on this territory
- Interpreter notes the sound is not adequate

Manitoba – Kelvin Goertzen

- Not unsympathetic to the position of the federal government
- Understand the challenge you are facing and that any decision would be scrutinized and criticized
- Esp Ottawa and Windsor
- Manitoba is a different situation
- We have a blockade outside our Leg winding down at 5pm today
- Emerson at the border also
- The RCMP and the Winnipeg Police ended it through negotiation
- They had the powers under the Highway Traffic Act, bylaws or the Criminal Code – did not need the Emergencies Act
- Questions around whether consultation was appropriate
- Was there a regional application available rather than a national application
- This is being brought forward by Premiers to COF
- We don't think it met the threshold or the consultation requirements

AB – Sonya Savage

- Thank you for the additional 40 RCMP officers from BC to help us resolve our blockade.
- But we did resolve it without the
- Highway Safety Act, Critical Infrastructure Act and the Criminal Code were used
- We used a Kijiji search to buy 11 pieces of equipment to use as tow trucks to resolve the situation
- Thank the federal government for the extra police officers but we do not think the Emergencies Act was necessary

NS – Brad John

- We were able to use our provincial Emergencies Act – gave tickets – did not let people stop in the convoys
- Disappointed how policing was taken from the province – ten of our officers were redeployed after a quick conversation
- We have a lot of RCMP vacancies – there has to be more consultation with provinces before that type of action is taken

BC – Mike Farnworth

- We did not have an issue with the feds invoking emergency powers based on what we saw in Ottawa
- Economic hostage taking at the Ambassador Bridge
- We were facing something similar here in BC at our port
- We were satisfied with the consultation from the federal government
- We will learn things from this situation
- There has been a change in tactics when it comes to protests – spill over from south of the border

BC- David Eby

- We watched with interest the use of FINTRAC in a way we had not seen previously.
- We have wanted to see gang money laundering, real estate money laundering tackled – we were interested to see it used to freeze accounts with questionable funds
- We were encouraged to see FINTRAC used and finding its feet
- Protests are way down the list in terms of how we expected to see FINTRAC used
- We encourage Canada to use it to tackle serious money laundering especially here in BC

Minister Lametti

- We did feel the consultation standard was met
- He will defend it publicly and in court if need be
- It includes interactions at the ministerial level, with officials, with police – not just premiers
- The reports we received were not all in agreement
- We don't necessarily agree with Quebec about how federalism works
- Drafted by a Quebec Prime Minister in 1988
- We have managed a very targeted application of the law
- We think this will be a positive precedent – very measure targeted, in the application of the law, this could become a standard for the future
- We are evaluating the duration in real time. Let us hope this situation will end sooner rather than later.
- Any continued application of this Act going forward will necessitate further discussion. WE will continue to discuss with you in that regard.

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